



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 7, 2011

2011-025

Contact: Julie Hasquet, Press Secretary

(907) 258-9304 office

(907) 350-4846 cell

Begich Responds to EPA Review of Large-Scale Development Projects

U.S. Sen. Mark Begich today issued the following statement after the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced it will review the suitability of large-scale development projects in the Bristol Bay watershed.

“I’ve long said that decisions about large-scale development such as the Pebble Mine must be based on sound science and not people’s fears. I’m pleased the EPA agreed with me not to use its preemptive ‘veto’ authority in the Clean Water Act in favor of a process that will inform the debate over this project.

“I still want to see more details about this process and how it will proceed. As I told Administrator Lisa Jackson this morning, I hope for a fully transparent process, that invites all sides to the table and involves all the affected stakeholders including fishing groups, tribes, Alaska Native Corporations and local communities. I also want to ensure this is a thorough and robust vetting of the issues involved and not just a bureaucratic exercise.

“Bristol Bay is one of Alaska’s most valuable resources and any proposed development within its watershed deserves no less than a rigorous review.”

###